

Volume 86

Monday October 21, 1996

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Urban unrest since 1911

Number 18

The McGill Daily



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## Comment

# Who cares about Montréal?

These days, everyone seems to have their eyes on Montréal. In the face of a stagnating economy, anglophone-francophone dissension and the deterioration of social services, consensus exists that something has to be done.

But the consensus stops there. Everyone who is 'interested' in Montréal seems to have their own vision of the city's future.

We see this glaringly at all three levels of government. Montréal bore the brunt of the blame for the failure of last year's referendum on sovereignty. After years of ignoring the city, the provincial government now sees the eco-

nomic revitalisation of Montréal as key to gaining support for sovereignty. And because Montréal is the economic engine that drives the province, Premier Lucien Bouchard and the Parti Québécois plan to woo residents with promises of new investment and job opportunities.

On the other side, the hard-line federalists would love nothing more than to see the city carried away in an irreversible downward spiral. The city's condition is a rallying point for extremists who claim that Québec separation spells economic doom, that hordes of corporations and non-francophone residents cannot get out of the city fast enough, and that Montréal will soon be nothing more than a cluster of dilapidated buildings.

In the centre of this storm stands the mayor of Montréal, Pierre Bourque. His extreme vision of Montréal includes turning the city into one gigantic botanical garden, complete with the CEOs of large corporations sipping tea on the marble terraces of the pavilions. Bourque and his cohorts are steamrolling through the privatisation of municipal

services while tiptoeing around the effects of massive cuts to social programmes on the city's population.

This approach tends to neglect the concerns of those most affected — women, minorities, queers, the homeless, street youths, welfare recipients and low-income earners.

Bourque's elitist approach is exacerbated by the behaviour of the Montréal police force. They too target those who they deem to be on the periphery of society. The MUCPD has a deplorable track record of human rights' abuses, particularly towards minorities, queers, and street youths.

According to these bureaucratic visions of Montréal, the city is a cauldron of corporate control and political extremism. Lost in this brouhaha are those whose interests are routinely relegated to the sidelines.

Everyone who lives in Montréal is aware that this is a time of turbulence and transition for the city. And everybody knows that something has to be done.

But the political actors have hijacked the debate and railroaded the agenda out of the practical,

everyday sphere.

Long before the government bodies began paying attention to Montréal, there have existed groups and individuals who work at the ground level, everyday, allowing this city to continue being a viable place to live. In the face of the new interests in Montréal, these people are trying to keep the issues they know are vital on the forefront.

These groups and individuals include anti-poverty organisations such as Project Genesis and Multicafé, tenants' rights advocate Arnold Bennett and long-time activist and co-founder of the founding members of Forum Québec, Dermot Travis.

Countering the push towards big development and the creation of a polarised society divided along ethnic and language lines, these people are holding together a cohesive and diverse population. They are the ones who care about Montréal and can help channel those other interests into something that works for the entire population of this city.

— anupgrewal & andreamason

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## Hyde Park

# Student Activists in Montreal and the Economic Summit

As the Economic Summit in Quebec approaches, beginning October 29, 1996, we see Quebec's tradition of militant student activists coming to the fore.

The summit is predicted by students to be the means by which Bouchard will hack social programs to bits, while claiming consensus and co-operation. Not the least of the damage expected will be to education, where cuts of \$700 million have been proposed.

Many students are unwilling to "work together" with the Bouchard government to propose solutions that will benefit the already privileged, and hurt the poor. Students are unwilling to support Bouchard's two year deficit reduction plan, which remarkably resembles the agendas of Mike Harris and Ralph Klein. Students, who voted Oui in the referendum because they deplored the anti-deficit, pro-elite rhetoric of the rest of the country, are unwilling to support these same strategies now being employed by the once socially conscious Parti Québécois.

Rather than participate in rubber-stamping the destruction of social jus-

tice in Quebec, student activists are planning to speak out. Through experience, the student movement knows that action is the best way to enable an alternative voice to be heard. To this end, CEGEPs throughout Quebec have been voting in their general assemblies to go on an unlimited general strike.

The general strike is a tradition amongst student activists in Quebec that goes back as far as 1968. Students in Quebec have held strikes in 1968, 1974, 1978, 1982, 1986, 1988 and 1990, each time with considerable effect. The demands that students are making this time to the government are: 1) to stop the cuts to education; 2) maintain the current tuition fee freeze; 3) to reverse the recent changes to the Quebec loans and bursaries program; 4) to abolish Cote R (an unfair system of determining eligibility for university entrance); 5) to ban new administrative fees in CEGEPs and universities.

With these demands in hand, students from all over Quebec will be coming to join in the march and the day of action in Montreal, Thursday, October 24, beginning 2:00 at Phillips

Square (Metro McGill). During the march, teams will be participating in actions that highlight the injustice of the cuts. McGill students are encouraged to either join the McGill action team which will be performing guerrilla theatre, or assemble at the Roddick Gates at 1:30 to go as a McGill contingent to join the demonstration.

This demonstration, which is a part of the Canadian Federation of Students' Pan-Canadian Week of Action, will also mark the beginning of a series of protests against the economic summit. Other protests will take place at the beginning of the summit, October 29, in front of the Sheridan Centre.

It is crucial that those concerned speak out now. Bouchard and the PQ government must hear that social justice cannot be abandoned in Quebec. For more information call Erin Runions, 398-3756.

by Erin Runions, VP-External  
Affairs, PGSS McGill,  
Local 79 Canadian Federation  
of Students



# Improvising municipal politics

## A look at Mayor Pierre Bourque a year before the next election

by anupgrewal

When you look out your window, what you are seeing is the domain of Montréal Mayor Pierre Bourque. If you are asking yourself "who is this guy?" you can be sure that you are not alone.

Alternately described as "insane", "a madhatter", "hard to read" and "a man of improvisation", those who work with him at City Hall, and those who scrutinise his every move are still hard pressed to answer the question "who is Pierre Bourque?"

But two years after his party, Vision Montréal, came to power at City Hall, Bourque has definitely begun to mark his territory in Montréal — for better or for worse

### REMINISCENT OF ANOTHER TIME

Looking at Bourque's policies from the last two years, one might think he's trying to hearken back to the authoritarian days of Mayor Drapeau's rule, albeit in a rather washed up, watered down way.

Jean Drapeau, who ruled in City Hall for almost 32 consecutive years until 1986, will be remembered by Montrealers for his dream of making the city a world class one, but who succeeded mostly in creating a huge debt.

Drapeau will be remembered for his big development schemes such as the Ville Marie tunnel and the 1976 Montréal Olympics, for which Montrealers were still paying at the end of 1994.

According to Michel Prescott, an independent councilor for Jeanne Mance, and one time member of the Montréal Citizen's Movement, which defeated Drapeau in 1986, "Drapeau did many good things but he demolished many valuable sectors of Montréal for big development like parking lots."

As for Bourque, says Prescott, "If you let him have his way, he would do the same thing."

So far, comments Lynda Guylai, city reporter for the Montréal Mirror, "Bourque seems to be a mayor who has attempted to find a project like that of Drapeau — to leave a name for himself in Montréal."

The problem is that

"Drapeau had 30 years to do what he did, Bourque is trying to do it in four," says Guylai.

### POWER IN HIS HANDS

Fresh from his 1994 electoral victory, the first mark Bourque made was his attempt to abolish the city's fledgling public consultation bodies.

One of the biggest criticisms Montrealers had of Drapeau was the way he ruled the city like a banana republic.

Drapeau's successor, Jean Doré was elected on a platform of reforming City Hall with the promise of public consultation being one of the major aspects of this reform.

While Doré hardly lived up to his pledge, he did manage to establish some promising institutions. These included a set of five standing committees to research and hold public hearings on issues, nine district advisory councils for citizen input and a citizen-run Consultation Office.

Upon his arrival at City Hall, Bourque moved to eliminate all of these cherished bodies. "Bourque doesn't like to consult," observes Guylai.

The reason, says Dimitri Rossopoulous, long time city council watcher and member of the Democratic Coalition - Ecology Montréal party, is that "Pierre Bourque was brought up and trained as a bureaucrat. This spilled over into his leadership, he likes to tell people what to do."

Luckily, Bourque was stopped by the Québec National Assembly from carrying out his plans to abolish public consultation altogether. However, what he did

in the end, has the same effect.

He eliminated the Consultation Office and replaced the District advisory councils with neighborhood councils, taking away their power to decide on basic issues like zoning. Also, he cut the five standing committees to two. He added a permanent Urban Development Commission,



run by council members, to research and make decisions on zoning.

But, says Guylai, "the[se] bodies only have the power to recommend."

Like Drapeau, Bourque has concentrated power into the hands of his personally appointed executive committee.

This committee, headed by a president who admitted that she knew little about municipal politics, has alternately made decisions behind closed doors and vetoed the decisions of the supposedly important Urban Development Commission.

Michel Prescott observes that even the executive committee is powerless in the face of Bourque. "Bourque's executive committee members don't have any real power. They have no control over the budget, they have no moral authority. In fact, no one has the power to say 'no' to

Bourque."

### BIG BUSINESS RULES

Surrounding himself with weak elected advisors, Bourque is sailing ahead with the controversial policies of privatising municipal services and encouraging development by business to revive the economy of Montréal. At the same time, he ignores the cuts to social services by the provincial government and the growing poverty of the city.

"When Bourque was asked at City council to denounce the welfare cuts, Bourque said 'no, that is not the job of the city' and when the hospitals were closed down in the city, we didn't hear a peep from the Mayor," remembers Guylai.

Rossopoulous comments that "when Bourque was campaigning, he said that the job of City Hall was to make the city more conducive to good business."

A year and a half into his mandate, Bourque decided that the best way to do this was to cre-

ate the 'wise guy committee,' a group of business men and women who advise the Mayor on the drive to privatise municipal services.

Already, Montréal has felt a taste of the City's withdrawal from the service sector. Three libraries have been shut down, community daycare workers are off the City's payroll and recreational services have been thrown in the laps of community organisations to fund and administer.

### HARD TO PREDICT

While Bourque seems to be changing the landscape of Montréal politics without the approval of Montrealers and without the consensus of his own party members or the opposition, he remains ever elusive and unpredictable.

"He is a man of improvisation," comments Prescott. Nobody really knows what

Bourque is thinking. "He's not much a man for dialogue," continues Prescott, "His relations with his councillors are not so good. He arrives late at caucus meetings, doesn't speak much, he doesn't work in a team but has his own agenda, which may change from one day to the next."

Guylai agrees "The real use of council meetings these days is to have things recorded, there is no real debate," she says.

But surprisingly, no one is sure of the effect of all of this on Bourque's popularity with the public.

"Bourque is a populist," comments Rossopoulous. "He spends much of his time greasing his constituency."

Bourque has appropriated Drapeau's personal touch. "If you wrote Bourque a letter, you'd get a personal reply and this is what the electorate remembers," says Rossopoulous.

Bourque is also good at making small concessions. "Whenever there is an uproar about something, he cleverly holds back," explains Rossopoulous. The latest example of this was his plan to change the name of Sherbrooke Street to "Bourassa Street" after the former Premier died. When every one took great insult to this, Bourque quietly backed down.

These compromises may work in Bourque's favour and perhaps that's why he can get away with some of his larger, more drastic changes.

However, says Prescott "I think four years of Bourque are enough. If there were four more it would be too much."

He doesn't think Bourque is charismatic enough to hang on for more than that "Drapeau was a great communicator, a politician — Bourque is not," he assesses.

But according to Guylai, if there is no one to challenge Bourque, he may still win the election.

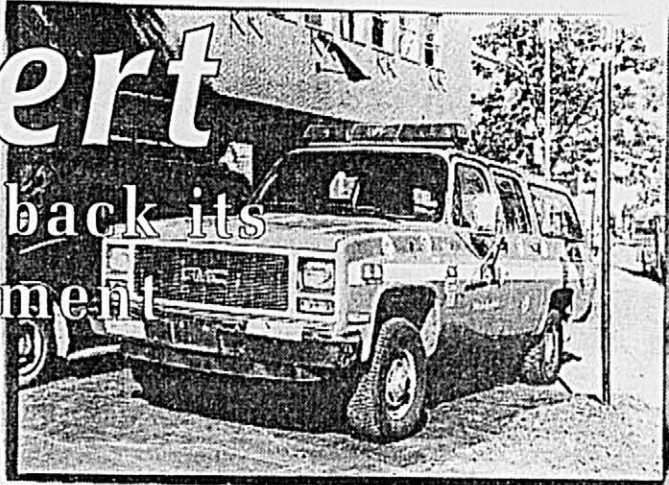
On the other hand, she thinks there is a possible way to "dethrone" Bourque and that is to look at the way he is privatising municipal services. "The mayor is supposed to provide services to the citizens. If he is passing these off to private corporations, then maybe we should look at getting a new mayor."



# Red Alert

## Montréal cuts back its fire department

by kathleenfrederickson



DAILY GRAPHIC BY DOROTHY FUNG

Montréal's fire department may not seem to be the most likely organisation to fall prey to the ravages of recession and municipal budget cutting. City council, however, has already cut two trucks from the department's fleet. Pending a decision by the city's Executive Council this Thursday, the cuts could become even greater.

Thursday's decision will be based on a report made by La Société de Prévention des Incendies à Montréal last August — a report made without the consultation of the firefighters' union.

While the City is not releasing the details of the study, firefighters suspect that the proposed reorganisation will mean significant cuts to their operating budget.

The City currently employs 1665 firefighters, a force approximately on par with other cities of Montréal's size and structure. The firefighters'

Union President Gaston Fauvel is opposed to the potential cuts. He recalls a meeting in 1992 where city councilors and firefighters alike agreed that the department was operating on the lowest possible budget.

Four years later, he still holds this view. "The number of firefighters we have now is the minimum," he said, adding that, even now, the department's response time is often far below acceptable limits.

According to the National Fire Protection Agency (NFPA), the organisation that sets fire regulations for both the United States and Canada, firefighters should respond to a call in under four minutes.

Currently, Fauvel notes, some calls originating from Montréal's more remote areas take up to ten or eleven minutes to be answered. "We don't go by the rules," Fauvel said, "we don't respect the NFPA guidelines."

and limit damages, because after five minutes a fire gets so big that rescue becomes practically impossible."

"With its policy of cut-backs," the pamphlet continues, "the municipal administration is exposing you to unnecessary risks."

The City, on the other hand, does not regard the cutting of two fire trucks as presenting a risk. Martine Primeau, a public relations official for the city, says that the two trucks were cut because they were no longer needed. The first truck on the scene of a fire, she said, arrives in under four minutes 80 per cent of the time. According to Primeau, this response rate is unusually high compared to other North American cities.

Any cuts proposed next Thursday, she states, will be made in the interests of both public safety and efficiency. She notes that fires occur much less frequently than they did 20 years ago and consequently, less firefighters are needed to respond to the city's demands.

The pamphlet published by the union disagrees. "If there were a fire in your home," it states, "fewer firefighters would fight it and there would be a longer response time because they would have to come from a fire station in a neighbouring district. The consequences to you could be very serious."

Fauvel also recalls last year's collective bargaining agreement between the union and the City where a provincial court overruled the City's proposed cut of 34 firefighters. The presiding judge, Fauvel said, argued that the firefighters were necessary for fire safety.

Because the City's Executive Committee will not announce its decision until Thursday, the contents of last August's study are currently unknown to both the public and the firefighters.

Fauvel, however, is worried about the contents of the study. For him, the fact that the study was made without any consultation or input from either the firefighters themselves or the union suggests that the city is not overly concerned with public safety.

"They don't think about the security of the people," he said. "They don't care about life."

The four minute response time is not random guideline. A pamphlet addressing the public by the union states that "firefighters have only five minutes to save people

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DAILY GRAPHIC BY DOROTHY FUNG

union, L'Association des Pompiers de Montréal, anticipates that Thursday's decision will reduce the force by at least 150 people and 12 trucks.



# Behind closed doors



by andreamason

## MUCPD attempts to abolish police ethics committee

In a city notorious for problems with its police force, it seems vital to have an ethics committee to investigate complaints filed by Montréalers against police officers.

A document leaked to Coalition démocratique Montréal écologique (CDME) City Councilor Marvin Rotrand last Wednesday suggests that the Montréal Urban Community Police Department (MUCPD) thinks otherwise.

Earlier this year, Parti Québécois Public Security Minister Robert Perrault mandated the former director of l'Université du Québec à Montréal, M. Claude Corbo, to examine the police disciplinary process in the province. The plan was to "streamline" the system, increase its efficiency and, of course, cut costs.

In response, the MUCPD proposed a return to the pre-1990 model of the police disciplinary process. Such a move would prevent complainants from being present at disciplinary hearings. It would also hamper public knowledge of any disciplinary measures taken by the police force.

"The MUCPD wants to go backwards," commented City Councillor Sam Boskey.

Instead of the existing open public system, the police department would prefer to return to the days of shady internal investigations conducted in the station backroom behind closed doors.

According to Rotrand, the plan "lacks transparency and the basic principles of justice."

### BACKTRACKING

In 1988, the provincial Liberal government legislated the creation of a Commissaire de déontologie policière du Québec in response to public criticism of the MUCPD's system of secret internal investigations.

Currently, the Commissaire receives citizens' complaints and is responsible for their subsequent investigations. Public scrutiny is ensured because the complaints are then presented to a discipline committee with a civilian majority. The complainant has the right to be present and to testify and dispute evidence.

Many fear that by eliminating this public body to which the police are accountable,

the police will be given a free reign on law enforcement and instances of brutality will increase.

"The complainant needs to see what goes on and what happens," said Rotrand at a press conference held at City Hall last Wednesday.

"It will be police taking care of police," declared Dermot Travis of PIRA Communications.

Some believe the implementation of the MUCPD's plan would only cause things to go from bad to worse.

Dan Philips of the Black Coalition of Québec said "the commission is a complete farce." He continued that "people continue complaining all the time. The necessary system of justice to deal with police problems does not exist."

Philips criticised the questionable track record of the MUCPD. He accused the police department of outright racism, citing the case of Martin Suazo, a Montréal citizen of Puerto Rican descent who was shot to death in May, 1995. Despite an investigation, the officer responsible was never charged.

"There are cases of blatant

brutality all the time," Philips commented.

### HOPE IN 1998

Despite the negative response to the proposed elimination of the ethics committee, other recently announced changes by MUCPD chief Jacques Duchesneau offers hope for some.

Last year, Duchesneau unveiled his plan to increase the number of stations from 23 to 49 smaller ones and reduce the levels of administration in the police department from nine to five. The plan is to be fully implemented by 1998. Duchesneau's mission is to increase the accessibility of the police for the public and make the police more of an everyday presence in the various Montréal communities.

City Councilor Helen Fotopolous is cautiously optimistic about the changes and already sees some improvements in the way the police conduct themselves. "There has been a concerted effort to be more present in the community," she commented.

With the establishment of smaller satellite stations, Fotopolous sees potential for increased dialogue between

police and citizens.

"When people have a problem, officers need to go into their kitchens and talk to them. If they've talked to people before, when they walk the beat, they're more [familiar]."

Fotopolous stresses the importance of police officers living and working in the areas which they serve and having a good understanding of the culture of the people who live there.

"Officers need to be sensitised to the current Montréal community. And it's not just folk festivals and ethnic food. The police force has to keep up with new immigrant populations and be able to do more than just translate."

Fotopolous is critical of the lack of diversity on the MUCPD police force, although she concedes that improvements have been made in the last few years. "The straight, white Québécois police profile is changing, but changing very slowly."

Others are far more pessimistic about the MUCPD's plans for change.

Boskey maintains that since the changes were announced "everyone has just been treading water. No one knows

where the stations will be located. No new programmes have been [instated]. The Public Security Commission hasn't been meeting in public. They're not carrying on debates. It's very difficult for the public to get an overview."

Boskey believes "small stations won't change cops' attitudes or make the police more humanistic and transparent. Culture, attitude and experience matter, not structure."

Boskey points to the proposal from the MUCPD to Corbo as evidence that the police force's actions contradict its words.

It appears that all the MUCPD's claims amount to little more than empty rhetoric, given their desire to take their affairs out of the public eye and do their dirty work in private.

"This is exactly what makes me so cynical and skeptical [of the MUCPD]," complained Boskey.

Philips paints an even more dismal picture of the police department. "There have been no improvements, no attempts to put programs together, no community involvement. It's all just image-making."

# The fight for better

New book offers glimpse of tenants' history

## homes

by idellasturino

Last spring, the City of Montréal spent close to \$1.2 million on a flashy, feel-good ad campaign promoting the city in a last-ditch attempt to win back the confidence of city dwellers. The ads paint a portrait of a vibrant, happy, culturally diverse city with a history to be proud of — but not surprisingly they leave out the city's most relevant histories and present day realities.

Thankfully, though, some Montréalers continue to offer alternative portraits of the city we call home. Most recently, long-time Montréal tenants' rights activist, one-time city councillor and ex-journalist at the *Montreal Gazette* Arnold Bennett has written a

book outlining the history of the city's politics and struggles around people's homes.

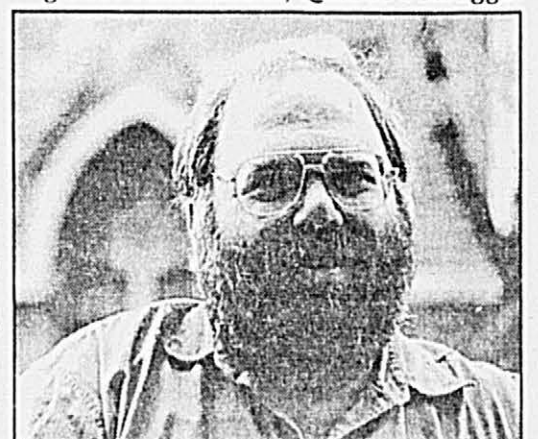
In his opening chapter, Bennett recounts the hard and cold years of the Great Depression when tenants in his grandmother's apartment on Drolet Street "took the shutters off the windows and burned them to keep warm."

This image — one of many equally striking in the book — sets the tone for a multiform exploration of the city's tenants' rights movement.

Launched in English this September (following an earlier French edition), *Shelter, Housing and Homes: A Social Right* includes essays by Bennett, and policy papers from two of Montréal's

tenants' rights groups, as well as Vancouver and Toronto-based groups on parallel issues in their cities.

*Shelter* touches on Montréal's struggle for rent control, Québec's struggle



DAILY PHOTO BY LUCY ATKINSON

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7



"THE FIGHT FOR BETTER HOMES" CONTINUED  
FROM PAGE 6

for better housing policy and the province's poverty. Revised papers by RCLALQ (Le Regroupement des Comités logement et Associations de locataires de Québec) and PROUD (People's Rights Over Urban Development) point to the universal right to housing even in the face of Montréal's rising poverty rates, and how this right can be better protected.

Given that Montréal was recently named Canada's poverty capital by Statistics Canada and is facing both federal and provincial cuts in spending on social services in general, these discussions are timely. And while tenants' rights have improved since the padlock days of the '30s, the situation remains far from ideal. Asked about the current state of affairs, the director of Housing Hotline, an information and referral service for tenants, points to recent changes to the Régie de logement which make it harder for tenants to register complaints and appeal decisions.

Furthermore, cuts to social housing mean that supportive and adequate housing is not yet a guaranteed right for lower-income Montrealers — a growing segment of the population.

Bennett also notes that Montréal remains now as it has always been — a tenant town, with 70% of Montrealers renting, down only 10% since the '70s. This high number of tenants has shaped the city's culture, municipal politics and the advances that have been made in terms of tenants' rights.

## Note from below

*Queer Creative, insightful, diversified articles, essays, photo essays and personal narratives on Queer Issues.*

the Queer Issue, hitting the stands like a derailed freight train November 11. This issue will attempt to include, but is by no means limited to, issues facing: transgender, lesbian, bisexual and gay representation and politics, sex workers, racism, sexism, heterosexism, bi-phobia, the commercialisation of mainstream queer media, and societal change. This is but, as they say, the tip of the iceberg. So please come to the Daily office in Shatner B-03 A.S.A.P. with ideas and suggestions. Don't let your voice go unheard.

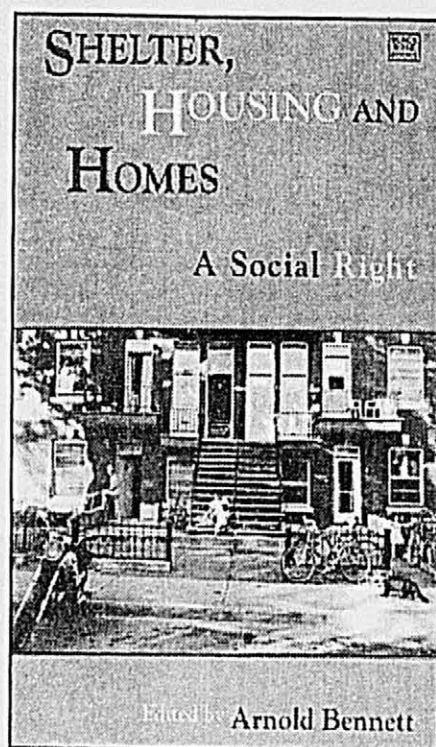
"One of the reasons that Québec tenant legislation is so strong is because of the strong middle class tenant population that had clout to influence government and that was in alliance with working-class tenants, otherwise we wouldn't have won," he says.

And tenants' rights, explains Bennett, have historically been an issue "where all the 'phones' — francophones, anglophones and allophones — were working together... demanding the same thing."

*Shelter's* relevance, however, is not limited to Montréal. Bennett refers in his essay to the demolishing of Victoriatown, then one of Montréal's working-class neighbourhoods, in preparation for a parking lot to serve the Expo '67 site. Asked about Toronto's bid for the next Olympics, Bennett points out that market pressure to buy out living space and convert it toward Olympic use may very well "put the squeeze" on Toronto tenants.

*Shelter's* success lies not only in its informative account of several struggles, demands, victories and challenges that have shaped Montréal, but also in its compilation of policy statements from grassroots groups which have taken part in tenants' rights issues, not only here, but in Toronto and Vancouver as well.

"All the documents in this



book, until the French edition was published, were never [widely] circulated," Bennett says, "... you couldn't find them in bookstores. Unless you were an activist, you wouldn't see them. The idea was to make these ideas more accessible."

An equally important motivation for Bennett however, is his hope to counter the lobby groups out there that believe housing should be ruled by a free market and "blame the victim for the problem."

Bennett says that the issue of tenants' rights is a constant battle.

"Every few years some wise guy gets a good idea about how to stick it to the public without knowing, and you have to fight them."

*Shelter, Housing and Homes: A Social Right is published by Black Rose Books and is available at most major book sellers in Montréal*

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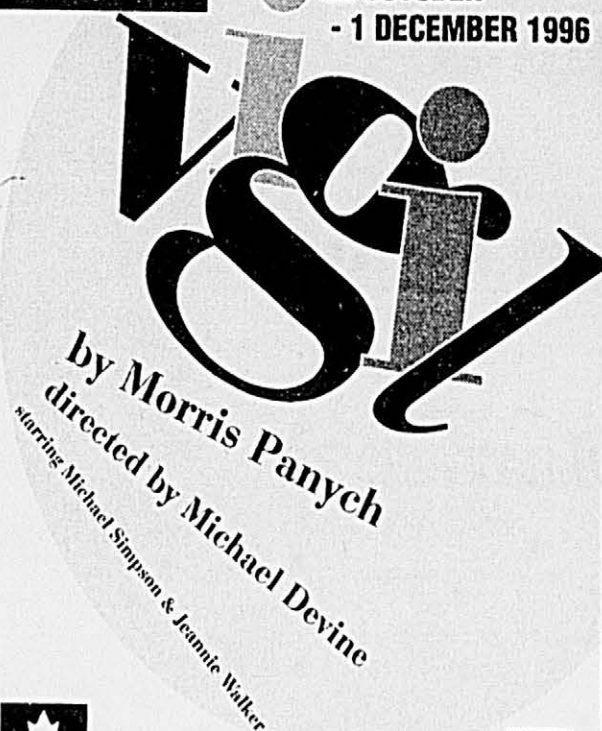
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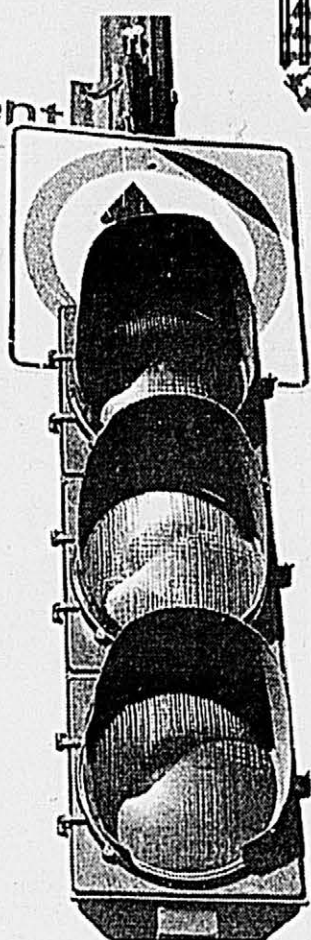
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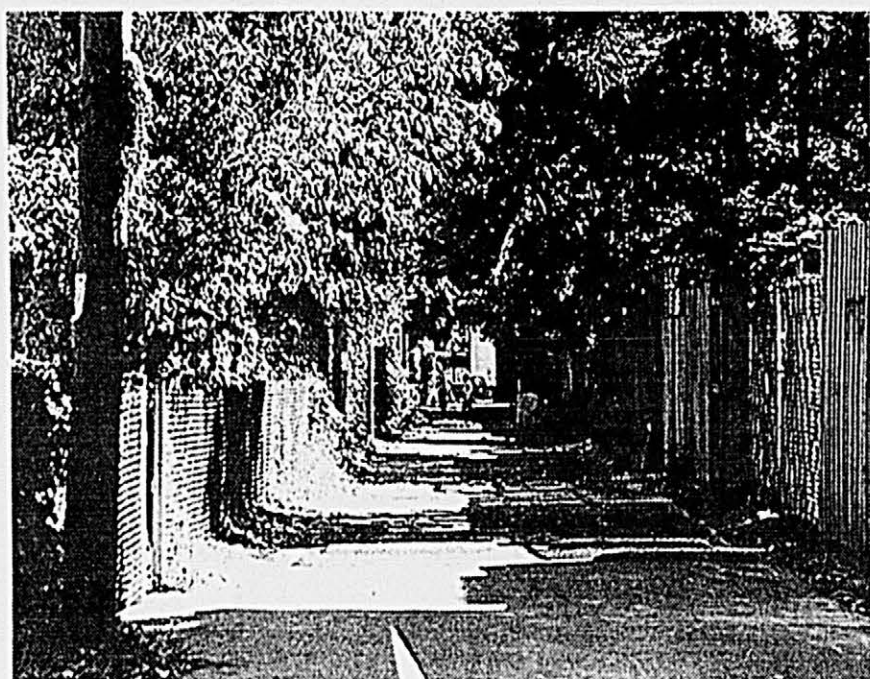
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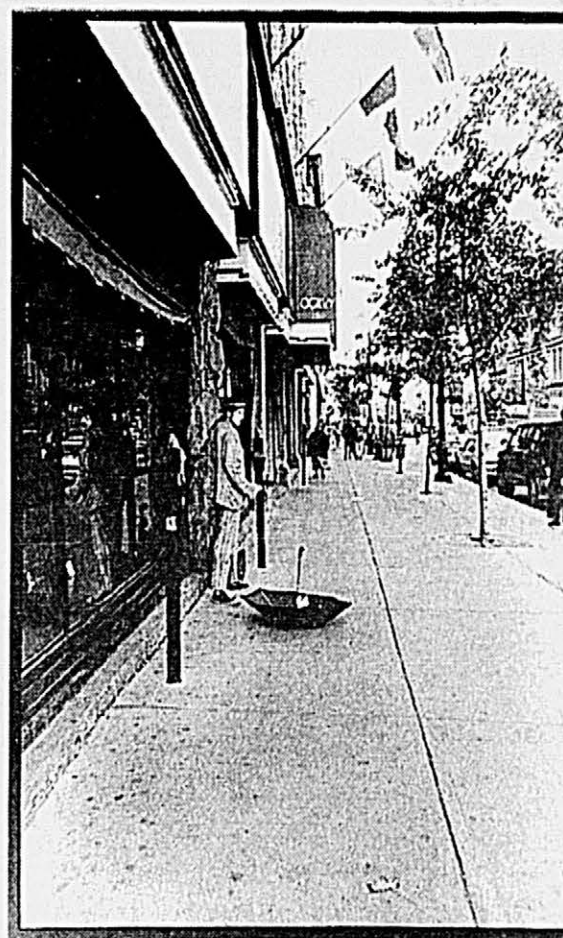
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# Dining Out Downtown

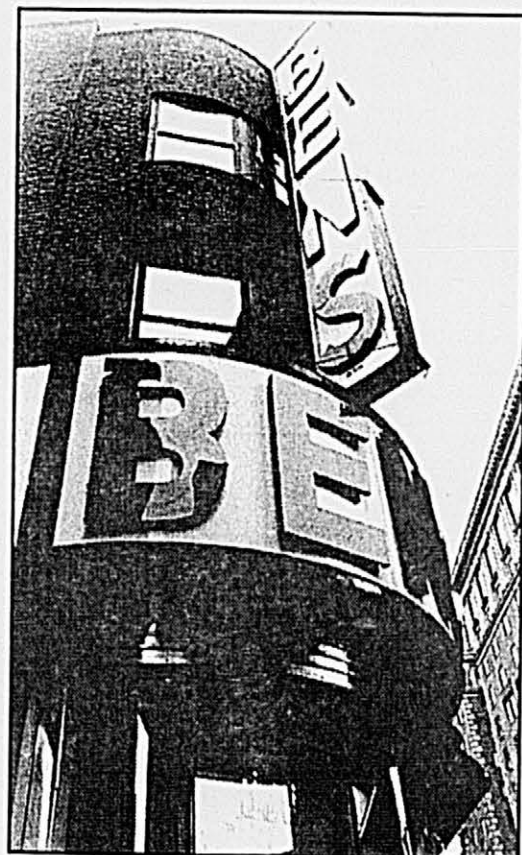
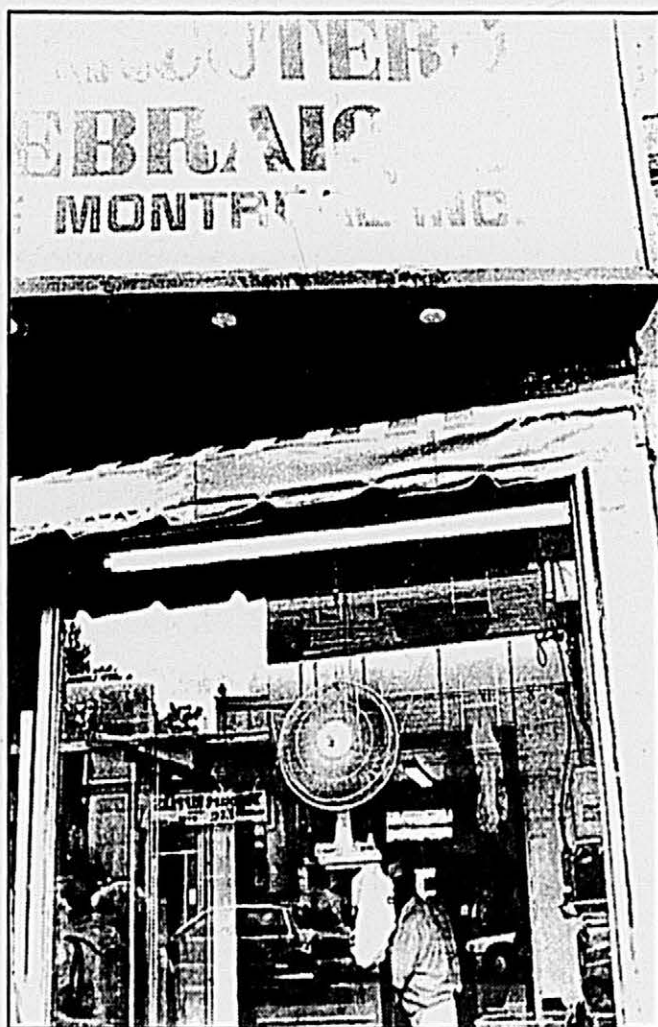
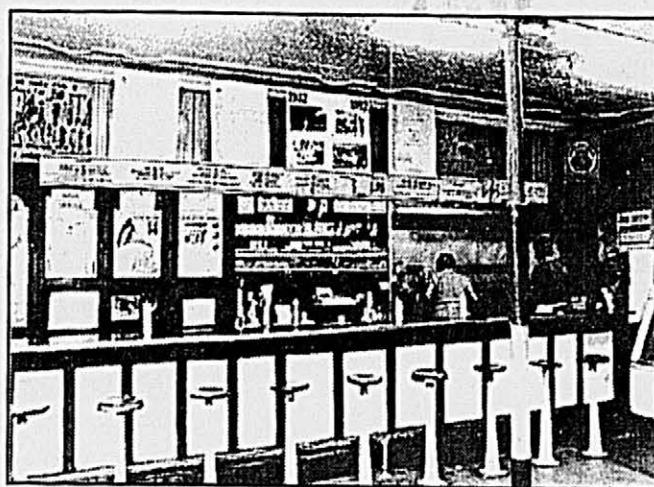
## Restaurant hopping in Montreal

by danielhertzman

with photos by Sarah Johnson

What is it about Montréal's landmark eateries that allows them to survive all these years, even in the age of cheap-food franchises?

Places like Ben's, Schwartz's and Dunn's are self-described city landmarks. But McDonald's recent invasion on Parc has brought the issue of survival close to home for the city's restaurants. While the influx of fast-food chains could threaten the existence of the places which have helped define the city's character



since as early as the turn of the century, the owners don't seem to be very worried.

The staff of every restaurant I reviewed claimed that the reason they have continued to thrive was because they offered the best product in Montréal, or even the world. They are countering the competition posed by fast-food chains with unwavering confidence in their food and the knowledge that they have carved a niche for themselves in the city.



The McGill Daily



# Manufacturing misinformation

## A look back at the way the media painted the invasion of Oka

by hasankarrar

This article, written three years ago, appears in the *Daily's* special issue on Montréal because we believe it demonstrates the strategic way in which Native people are misrepresented in Montréal media - an injustice which continues today. Understanding this is crucial to the debate around justice in the face of land claims for Native people.

The consistency with which these misrepresentations occur are shocking, but what is more shocking are the underlying motivations, functioning with the specific intent to hide the truth from the public. This article is intended to serve as a reminder to our readers that this underhanded censorship has not ceased and may not cease any time soon. The onus falls on us to question the reality manufactured by misinformation.

The Canadian army sent more troops to Oka in the summer of 1990 than they did to the Persian Gulf during 'the liberation of Kuwait'. The state brought in everything from tanks to helicopters in their confrontation of a group of poorly armed men who had erected barricades to stop the conversion of their ancient burial grounds into a golf course.

The press cheered on as armored vehicles plowed over Mohawk graveyards to enforce 'law and order'. The army was praised for "professionalism", "discipline" and most ironically, "restraint."

The way the news was reported became the public's understanding of the "Oka crisis." According to Mohawk people, the news coverage of the confrontation brought home the fact that Native issues have always been ignored or misrepresented.

"The coverage of Oka was one big lie," said Estelle Seguin of the Native Friendship Centre. "Those kind of stories only increase sensationalism."

Alex Roslin, then staff writer at the Montréal *Mirror*, said that the crisis at Oka was deliberately misrepresented.

"The *Gazette* is very anti-Native. Its reporting of what happened during the summer of 1990 was completely racist," Roslin said. "The reporters were incredibly biased."

"The word of one policeman had more weight than that of a dozen Mohawks," he added.

Kenneth Deer, editor of Kahnawake community newspaper *The Eastern Door*, blames the commercial press for creating an artificial reality by exaggerating the potential for violence behind the barricades.

"They would talk about the guns and the arms while completely ignoring the real issue," Deer said. "The real issue was land."

Graeme Hamilton, a *Ga-*

zette reporter, defended the accusations against the paper. "I think that a fair analysis was done," he said. "We were supportive and sympathetic of Native claims, but not of their tactics."

"The *Gazette* was not an army or police mouthpiece during the Oka crisis," Hamilton said. "We had our reporters inside the barricades at all times."

Geoffrey York, a *Globe and Mail* reporter, was also behind the barricades. He told the *Concordia University Newsletter* that the media "com-

of the land]," York added.

Roslin said that the media associate Kanehsatake with warriors and cigarettes. "This made people feel that they would betray Québec by siding with the Mohawks in something like the Oka issue," he said.

### THE MEDIA CORPORATION

Céline Leduc, a Mohawk supporter, is convinced that the media misrepresents the Natives simply for the sake of "making an enemy."

"The media is the national mouthpiece. If the media rec-

they are portrayed in the media is completely incorrect."

Roslin does not believe that it is merely a question of nationalism. "The same kind of thing happens in Ontario or British Columbia where there are not separatists as such," he said.

"First Nation issues are always misrepresented or ignored by the Canadian news media because most of those Nations are located on lands which are wanted by multinational corporations."

The financial rewards are considerable. "We are not

erate racism."

"A lot of important stories don't get attention. The *Surêté de Québec* was involved in cigarette smuggling to a far greater extent than the Mohawks," Roslin said.

### NOTHING NEW

"There's always been reluctance to portray Native culture in the mainstream media," said Deer. "Since 1990 there has been an increase in coverage of Native issues. However, they have always ignored the fact that we are a Nation. We have our land, our culture and our government," he said.

"The media has deliberately ignored the First Nations of Québec. The francophone media in general is still very negative," Deer added.

Seguin also accused the media of ignoring important Native concerns. "They're ignoring aboriginal issues and land claim taxation," she said.

Hamilton, however, insists that Native people receive ample press. "Obviously, every interest group thinks that they're not receiving enough coverage," he said. "I don't think that there is any bias."

According to Roslin, it is not so much a question of bias, but rather what a newspaper would be willing to publish. "Reporters get fired if they publish something against the paper's politics. It is all about what you want the public to believe."

In their coverage of the Oka crisis, most journalists relied on government and army briefings for information.

"I am astounded that some columnists and commentators thought they could understand the truth without making any effort to talk to the Mohawks who witness the daily war," York said.

Reprinted from the September 13, 1993 edition of the *Daily*.



Mohawk barricade, 1990

pletely missed the story."

"One of their biggest mistakes was failing to understand the history of the Native people in Canada," he said. "They failed to understand the issues of sovereignty and land claims, and that Oka is an example of the government's failure to deal with these issues."

"They [the media] focused on cigarettes and gambling which were not the motivations [for the defense

ognize the Natives as a separate Nation, than they will also have to acknowledge the fact that the Natives have the right to the land," Leduc said.

"White people have never made an attempt to understand Natives," she said. "The fact is that they are incredibly peaceful people. Though they were provoked at Oka they refused to retaliate because they feel that there has already been too much bloodshed," Leduc added. "The way

talking about millions of dollars, but billions and billions of dollars. The Canadian economy is based on the exploitation of resources without creating jobs, and the Natives appear to be sitting on such land," said Roslin.

"Most of the corporations in Canada are owned by a small group of people. The media is one such corporation," Roslin said. "They don't want the public to be aware about Native issues. It's delib-



# Living in the poverty capital

## Economic development for Montréal still means economic disparity

by anupgrewal

The most competitive business in Montréal these days seems to be the one of cutting public services and social programmes. Federal, provincial and municipal governments are all tripping over each other to see who can reach the chopping block first.

Last year Montréalers watched as the provincial government closed down nine of its hospitals with a questionable plan to transfer essential services and jobs to other areas of the health sector. This all happened with nary a peep from Montréal Mayor Pierre Bourque.

Also vying for space on the increasingly cluttered chopping block have been municipal services such as libraries, recreational programmes, community day cares, social housing and tenants' rights agencies.

All of this comes at a time when Montréal exemplifies the increasingly wide discrepancies between the rich and the poor in urban centres across Canada.

"From the outside, this is a wealthy society," remarks David Alper of Project Genesis, an anti-poverty group in Côte des Neiges. "But you have to dig beneath the surface to see that wealth is not the reality for many people. It's hard to talk about but it's a reality."

In fact, you may not have to dig so deep to see the reality of poverty that Alper refers to. This summer, Statistics Canada reported that Montréal, with 22% of its population living under the poverty line, is the poorest city in the country. Montréalers also live in a province with an unemployment rate of over 11.75%, and 20% of its population is on social assistance.

The reality of this province's high level of poverty, however, is not reflected by the people in Outremont, Westmount or the nearest IBM building. For the most part, it is reflected by women, single parents, senior citizens and parents with children under the age of six.

Groups like Project Genesis see the economic disparities of this city everyday.

"We see things from the ground. We see that more and more people are coming with more and more difficult problems," explains Alper.

And according to Michael Gittens of the Black Community Association in Côte des Neiges, the economic discrepancies are not hard for anyone to see. "We see on the

news everyday what effect the current economy has on people at the bottom."

Part of this effect is that more and more Montréalers are being evicted for failing to pay rent, more people are living in neglected buildings in areas where few building inspectors are employed, and more people are without jobs and adequate welfare.

"Everyone at the bottom end of the scale is being hit," says Alper.

He takes the example of the new immigrant population: In a small job market, they are "the last ones hired and the first ones fired."

Recent changes to welfare eligibility in the province are also having an effect on new immigrants.

According to Alper, refugee claimants have been removed from the "non-available" scale which allows people who are waiting for job training to receive welfare.

"The next step," predicts Alper of the upcoming large scale reforms to welfare in November, "will be to eliminate welfare for refugees altogether."

Young people too, comments Gittens, are feeling the brunt of the faltering economy and are leaving the city. He adds that this may be because they have the ability to move out of the city and find jobs elsewhere. At the same time, however, there are many who do not have this option. According to Gittens, this means that "we are left with a growing needy population but there are less people willing to help those who need it."

### REVITALISING OR WIDENING THE GAPS?

Reacting to Montréal's stagnating business economy, the provincial government and the Bourque administration have begun chanting the mantra of economic revitalisation for the city.

Says Claude Lauzon of the Community economic development corporation of Côte des Neiges and NDG, a para governmental organisation, "The new economy is the digital economy. More people should focus on this new economy and also on small businesses."

Lauzon is optimistic about the revitalisation of the city's economy and its ability to provide jobs. "There are lots of opportunities. I am very confident in Montréal," he asserts.

But who will benefit from this 'new economy'?

"Yes there are a lot of new commercial avenues open.

But there are people being excluded from this new job market — women, the aged and minorities," says Alper.

Without a university education, money to invest or basic skills, the job market seems closed to many who need work.

Alper asks, "What's happening to the people who won't be hired? And for them, the problems are being exacerbated with the cuts to social housing and welfare."

For Alper and Gittens, while the difficulties and the issue of the city's economic disparities are complex, the solutions are not so hard to find.

While Bourque seems to believe that condominiums and television ads are the way to

make Montréalers feel better about their city, Alper believes there are other ways to improve the quality of life for people.

"There are simple solutions: keep social programmes, train people, and integrate affirmative action in the job market," he recommends.

The problem is perhaps not finding solutions to poverty, but rather who is interested in doing so.

"Our governments are not ready to address these concerns," comments Gittens.

"The city can do many things other than big development. It just requires the political will," he adds.

One of the first opportunities people may have to cre-

ate this will be the upcoming Economic Summit being held on the weekend of October 29. The summit is being sponsored by the Parti Québécois and will include members from "all sectors of society." These groups will come together to decide on the direction of economic policy in the province of Québec. A large coalition of anti-poverty groups under the name of Solidarité populaire Québec will be holding a demonstration against the PQ's social policies on the Oct. 29.

For more information about the Oct. 29 demonstration, contact Project Genesis at 738 2036.

## What the textbooks don't say A Mohawk history of Montréal

by audrasimpson

Montréal was once, by all accounts, Indian Country.

In 1535 Jacques Cartier landed on the shores of Montréal, where he found Montréal's first Native community, "Hochelaga." This community, some say, was so poor and so pathetic that the people threw up there arms with joy and welcomed the White explorers.

It is said that they offered their sick for Cartier to heal, and sat in rapt attention while Cartier read them the Gospel of St. John to assuage their pain and suffering. The Indians brought Cartier and his crew up the Mountain, which he promptly staked with a cross, naming the territory "Montréal." He did a little surveying from the summit and then quickly set sail, lest the friendly Indians turn mean.

This is the conventional version of Montréal's history as offered by some modern Canadian historians. It's a familiar tale. The Indians were pathetic, thrilled to see the explorers, made terrific guides and were worthy of being saved. "Indians" — generic people who were racially different but not so distinct.

The textbooks dismiss the Indians that Cartier encountered as members of a "mystery nation", one that bore no resemblance to any of the six modern Iroquoian nations and that had vanished by the time Champlain arrived in Montréal 100 years later. All that is left of them are pot-

tery shards and pipes — material culture that speaks of Hochelagan, not Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida or any other Confederacy origin.

But we Mohawks aren't comfortable with this history. We believe that Montréal was ours, and our case is simple.

The village "Hochelaga" was Mohawk. The people that Cartier encountered lived in longhouses made of bark, a Mohawk practice. Their settlement was surrounded by linked and sharpened poles, a typical Iroquois defensive measure. The settlement was also surrounded by cornfields, an agricultural benchmark of Mohawk people.

Some historians, like Concordia professor Gerald Alfred, have argued in favour of the Mohawk claim to Hochelaga based on the Mohawk language. Modern Mohawks call Montréal "Tiotiake" or "place where people separated". But older Mohawk language speakers referred to the Island as "Otsira:ke" or "a great deep fire". "Ochehaga," the name Cartier wrote for this place, was in fact a shortened (and strangely translated) Mohawk word for the people who lived at "Otrisa:ke."

As we all know, stories depend largely on the storyteller. Mohawks, like many other Native people, have had their stories told by others for centuries, with little consultation or confirmation of their validity.

Hence the accepted story of Montréal becomes a typical discovery narrative with "mystery Indians," rather than Mohawks. Such history is obviously not our own. And such history serves, in the end, to remove us from the landscape of memory and geography.

For those considering an alternative story to the one that is common, remember this: Montréal is part of the vast territory that once was occupied and used by Mohawk people.

Ironically, our ancestors (that mystery band of poor and tired "Hochelagans" who joyously received Cartier and his boatmen and then vanished) now rest beneath the soil at the prestigious University Club on Mansfield — a place Stephen Leacock guessed was the central hearth of Hochelaga.

In Montréal Seaport and City, he mused that it "is strange to think that it was in the lounge room of the University Club that Jacques Cartier read the Gospel of St. John to the savages. It is a thing that could stand doing again."

To this we respond that it takes much more than the gospel and biased history to render us invisible.

This piece was written by Audra Simpson, a Mohawk woman, for the first edition of *School Schmoool*, a QPIRG publication, and reprinted from the second 1996 edition.



# Flocking to the 'burbs

## Wealthy residents find greener pastures outside city boundaries

by markratner

Despite being the home of some of Canada's wealthiest corporations, Montréal, with 22% of its population living below the poverty line, is regarded to be the poorest city in the country. This impoverishment is exacerbated by the longtime and steady withdrawal of people away from downtown Montréal, into the surrounding suburbs.

Lured by the lower property taxes and real estate of the suburbs, former Montréalers are finding that it is preferable to commute to, rather than to live in the city. This exodus has resulted in a fiscal crisis for the city of Montréal.

City councilor Sam Boskey explains the problem, "when you have people living beyond city boundaries they do not contribute money in taxes."

Since municipal taxes are based solely on property values, the further one gets from the city, the less they will have to pay. Usually, it is the wealthy who have the financial means to move out of the city and take advantage of lower tax rates.

Montréal's unequal taxation and urban flight problems start with the basic organisation of the communities of the Island of Montréal. Aside from Montréal proper, there are 27 other municipalities surrounding the city. All of these, have their own mayor and city council. Since 1970 however, all of the municipalities including Montréal, joined together to form the Montréal Urban

Community (MUC). This body controls services such as the police, public transportation, housing and environmental issues.

The trouble with the MUC is that since Montréal proper is the largest municipality, it contributes the most funding and services and pays the most taxes. This coupled with the fact that many middle class residents are leaving the city, leads to the continuous depletion of Montréal's wealth.

Thus, Montréal's structure as is makes it easy for people with money to have their cake and eat it too — get the services of the city but live in the quiet of suburbia.

For Boskey, the problem is self-perpetuating. Wealthy people moving out of the city lead to a reduction in tax revenue. This lessens the amount of money available to the government to spend on social services. Hence, there is less reason for people to live in the city. Boskey

feels that this cycle "must be stopped."

There are several alternatives that are cited as possible solutions to this problem. Some have proposed changing the tax system to make municipal tax based on income, not property value. Others suggest that if toll booths entering the city were created, commuters who work, but do not live in the city would be forced to contribute some money to municipal revenue.

Boskey points out that any such proposals for a change in legislation would face a tough battle in City Council. Since there are so many conflicting interests of people living in different regions and of differing backgrounds, "it is difficult to satisfy everyone," he says.

Although the Mayor's office has not acted in the form of a legislative change, they acknowledge the problem. Sandy Hubert, communications officer for the City of Montréal agrees, "Sure, for the city, [urban flight] is a problem. Right now there is no solution."

Hubert explains that the city must work cooperatively with the provincial government in hopes of reaching a solution. And this may in fact be a time when cooperation between the two levels can occur. For many years, the provincial government has largely ignored Montréal's woes, preferring to concentrate on development in the outer lying regions of the island. This all changed last year with the creation of the

Ministry of Greater Montréal by Lucien Bouchard's Parti Québécois.

Simon Lacroix, press agent for the Ministry says that the Provincial Government is working to solve the problem. He points out that the Province has responded to the needs of the city by making temporary transfer payments. "In 1995-96, the Province contributed \$43 million in a fiscal pact to compensate the city," he says.

However, Lacroix argues that transfer payments are only a Band-Aid solution. He notes that "right now, we are discussing a more permanent solution."

A major area of concern is that of public transportation. Because many of the users of public transportation reside outside the city, they do not contribute money to its costs. Lacroix explains that this is of primary concern. "We will create an agency to have more equity in public transportation," he asserts.

If the trend of urban flight continues, Montréal might soon suffer the same fate as many American cities, where the low income families and new immigrants who can't afford a place in the 'burbs', are left to inhabit a decaying city center without adequate social services, while the outside areas get wealthier and wealthier. However, Lacroix expresses hope for Montréal saying, "[Montréal] is still a safe place, and an affordable place to do business." He adds, "there is still a long way to go before it is as bad as some American cities."



DAILY GRAPHIC BY REX HUANG

## How Montreal got Word

### Spoken word circuits shine

by mikecullen

"We will refuse no one," says Jake Brown at one of his impromptu Yawp! spoken word and poetry slams. His smiling face onstage is a gleeful leer to some spectators especially to the next wordsmith; a nervous and studious looking girl with her poem in hand. But if this gleeful leer is indeed visible, it is there because Brown and his peers have successfully woven spoken word into the cultural fabric of the city. His is the new creed of spoken word; accessibility to the masses - or more precisely, to the individual.

Spoken word is a derivative of the age-old literary (and often academic) form of po-

etry and born of the more recent poetry slams of the 1900's. Cultivated as a more theatrical and dynamic translation of poetry, spoken word is continually evolving; incorporating multimedia as visual compliments to the oral presentation.

The white cards inscribed with the work of local artist Victoria Stanton signify the broadening of spoken word into other forms. Working in silence, Stanton exhibits the reverse of the genre, a sort of anti-spoken word.

"Will you help me overthrow the government if things get too... [next card] ... shitty," say Stanton's

words on white.

If these ideas seem subversive it's because spoken word has become the medium of immediacy; an outlet to the moment. Personal and political manifestos thus abound in the work of many spoken word artists. Recited and amplified, these messages are made more fleeting by their human speech time frame. Unlike poetry, it exists only in the minds of the listeners and is disseminated to others orally. In that fashion, spoken word is a recouping of the ancient tradition of passing history and lore from mouth to mouth, generation to generation. - a time before the in-

vention of books or popular written language.

This re-discovery of sorts, can be traced to the summer of 1993 when Perry Farrell's now infamous alternative music roadshow rolled into town for its one (and to date only) show- Lollapalooza. With it, came a distinctly unheralded novelty act called spoken word - a seemingly backwater notion compared to the highly publicised virtual reality rides.

Spoken word garnered rave, albeit limited, reviews however, and succeeded in planting the concept into the just evolving Montreal consciousness of literary off-

shoots.

With this in mind, fast forward to the spring of 1994 and the saga of Lee Gotham. Nearing graduation from Concordia's English Literature B.A. program, Gotham found himself at a crossroads.

"[I thought to myself] what does what I'm doing here have to do with out there?"

With that question, Gotham proceeded to organise a new literary concept based on his schooling; something burgeoning with unknown potential. Aware of the recent advent of the spoken

CONTINUED ON PAGE 14



# Demanding justice

by tamankochar

## Workers say inhumanity rages at Peerless textiles

**M**ontréal-based Peerless Textiles, the largest manufacturer of men's wool suits in North America, has had a

controlled by the workers themselves has made the workers' quest for justice even more difficult. "It is believed on good evidence that the

lenged under Article 149 for company domination. In the first instance, the Labour Tribunal found that the in-house union — the Peerless Worker's

stipulated that only workers with Canadian citizenship could hold office or even vote in union elections.

Considering that over two thirds of the workers are non-citizens, Peterson commented, "workers could not participate in basic functions of the union."

Peerless workers won the case against discrimination in the Fraternity.

The precedent from 25 years ago and the confidence of the last victory, led the workers to a long spring and summer of protests and the launching of the latest legal battle against the management.

In April and May, 24 Peerless workers were suspended and 15 were fired for publically protesting the lack of free speech and rights at Peerless.

In May, workers staged a demonstration, wearing gags symbolising their inability to speak out against their working conditions. In August and September, the management fired three more workers and has since suspended dozens more.

In total, Peerless workers have filed 91 complaints under article 15 of the Labour Code for illegal dismissals and reprisals by the company.

But the management of Peerless is prepared to fight dirty. At a news conference on October 11, 1996, Ramon

Garcia, a Peerless worker from the Dominican Republic, remarked, "Our own union is going to sue us because we are trying to make it work for us. A real union would not do this to its own members."

The workers have been sued by the factory owner in the amount of \$700,000 for "giving false information and damaging the company reputation."

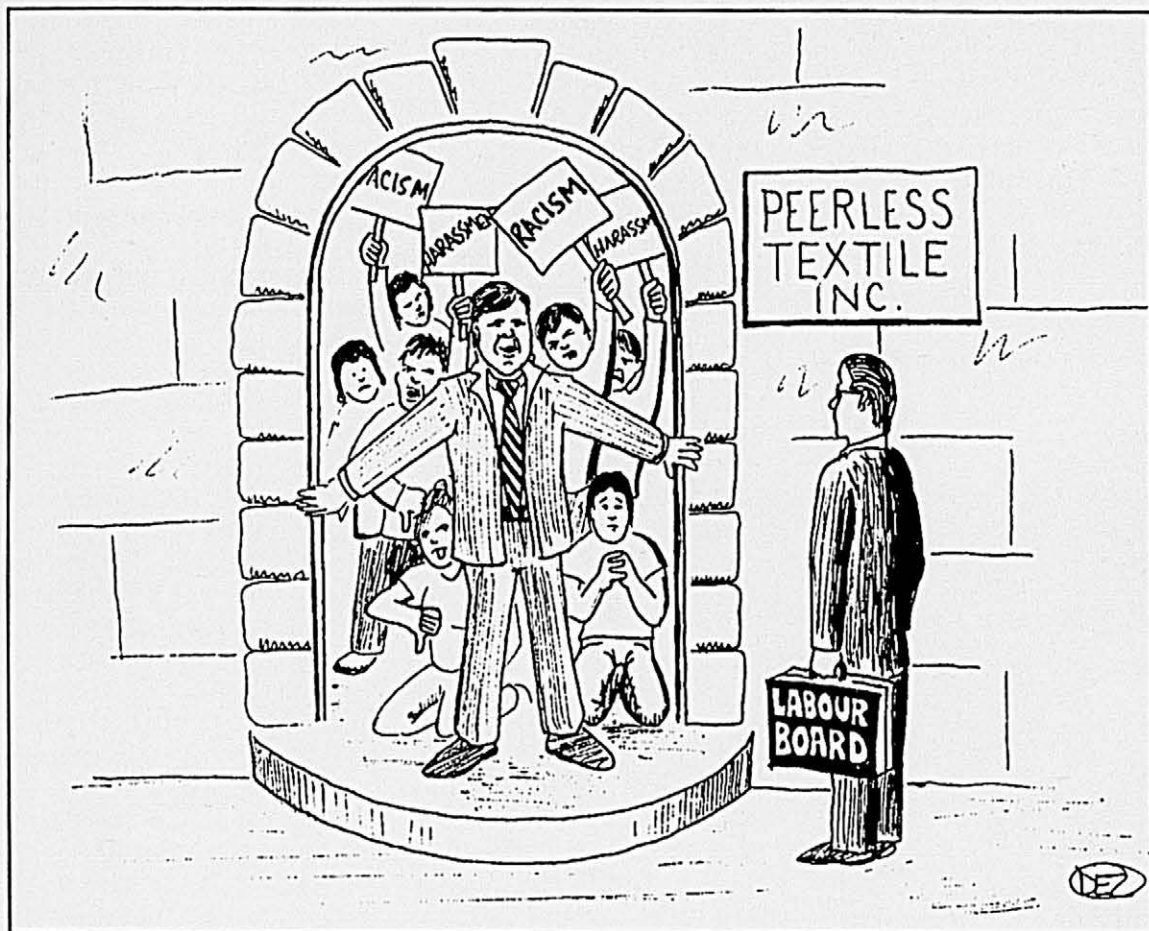
The fact is, asserts Sri Lankan worker Siva Chandran, "the company plays with the workers."

Peerless, which had revenues of \$169 million in 1994, has customers across North America. Their products are distributed to many major retailers including Macy's, The Bay and Eaton's.

In fact, informing those who buy Peerless-made textiles about their concerns has been one of the tactics of Peerless workers from Montréal and elsewhere.

Thousands of workers protested at Macy's stores in New York, and at Eaton's and The Bay stores in Canadian cities in July, conveying their message and asking consumers to take a position in support of Peerless workers. The workers argued that when customers demand high quality goods, they should also be aware of the conditions endured by the workers behind those goods.

After months of protests, says Gomes, "all we want is to be treated like human beings."



DAILY GRAPHIC BY JAMES DEZIEL

record number of 48 complaints of discrimination and harassment filed against it. The factory employs around 2,200 people, about 80 per cent of whom are recent immigrants, mostly from South Asia.

On February 14, 1996, a number of Peerless workers filed complaints with the Québec Human Rights Commission, charging their company with ethnic discrimination and harassment, sexual harassment and other violations of human rights.

The workers say the average wage at Peerless is almost \$1.30 less than their counterparts in the garment industry. But inhumane working conditions are at the root of the workers' complaints. Peerless workers have recounted incidents of verbal abuse and harassment. "The foreman shouted at me so loudly that people standing by started crying," said Bala, a worker of two years at Peerless.

In a recent article in the *Montréal Gazette*, a reporter found that Peerless workers toil without any heating in the winter or air-conditioning in the summer. "We are treated like slaves," described Edward Gomes, a Peerless worker from Bangladesh, who has been fired for retaliating.

The absence of a union

[present] union was set up by the company specifically to keep any real union out," said Margaret Peterson of the Syndicat du Vêtement Textile et Autres Industries (SVTI), or the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees, which is aiding the Peerless workers in organising another union.

According to Gomes, the existing union — known as the Fraternity — "is the union of the bosses and owners themselves." This fact, attests Gabriel Perez Villena, another discouraged worker, means the workers are "scared of speaking out because the Fraternity sends us letters threatening that we'll be fired."

But this has not stopped Peerless workers from continuing to lobby for changes at the textile company. Last week, the workers filed a petition under the Québec Labour Code to dissolve their union, alleging that the Fraternity is illegally controlled and supported by company management. Article 149 in the Code states that if the Québec Labour Tribunal finds a union association to be illegal, it may be dissolved. Under the Code, company domination is considered illegal.

This is the second time in 25 years that an in-house union at Peerless has been chal-

lenged under Article 149 for company domination. It was ordered to be dissolved.

And then in January of this year, the workers sued the Fraternity for illegal sections in its constitution which

"HOW MONTREAL GOT THE WORD"  
CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

word movement elsewhere, Gotham assembled a cadre to explore Montréal's literary territory.

"Enough Said" became a reality in the fall of 1994 and included a variety of the city's new talent. Soon, Gotham's gatherings grew to 100 to 150 people crammed into small spaces where the events were presented. People sat on bare floors and the sidewalk outside venues when weather permitted.

Predictably, a media blitz ensued that carried the movement beyond its infancy to where it is today; a viable and legitimate segment of the literary and entertainment landscape.

This isn't to say that Gotham was single-handedly responsible for the spoken word explosion in Montréal — he was simply one of several initiators of the scene. Other figures played equally important roles; one

among those is Jake Brown and his Yawp! weekly sessions which continue today.

But as Lollapalooza left its mark, spoken word sprouted in other places, speeding the evolution of the genre. News of it spread like California forest fires all across the U.S. Other population centres like San Francisco and New York have evolved similarly to Montréal.

"It helped [the Montréal spoken word scene] that it happened in a lot of places outside Montréal," says Victoria Stanton.

The talent of other locales allowed for the exchange of ideas and innovations that refused to stay isolated. Suddenly, crossovers from the poetry and music field happened to fill the newly created void.

The spoken word population stabilised by 1995 yet continued to grow steadily.

Presently, artists have a tendency to experiment with variations of spoken word, theatrical performance, and poetry but, "people tend to settle with one thing," Stanton explains.

But that doesn't prevent collaborations between literary related arts; the precursors of spoken word were often squeezed between concert sets as a novelty to replace PA music. Even those artists recognised the need to bring spoken word to the forefront where it now resides.

Although it is recognised as a separate form of art unto itself, spoken word still requires the support of other arts to remain aloft, hence the advent of multimedia presentation and cabaret-style formats.

However, the feeling is if this variety can sustain the movement, word will get around and people will listen.



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Monday, October 21, 1996 The McGill Daily



# Events

## Monday, Oct. 21

• The Women's Canadian Club of Montréal features Father Emmett Johns of Dans la Rue, an organization serving homeless and runaway youth. Lecture 13h30 at Montreal Citadel 2050 Stanley.

## Tuesday, Oct. 22

• The University Women's Club holds meeting — Montreal Badminton and Squash Club, 3505 Atwater, 18h30. Info 488-9782.

en's Club holds meeting — Montreal Badminton and Squash Club, 3505 Atwater, 18h30. Info 488-9782.

## Wednesday, Oct. 23

• The Montreal MED-CHI Society presents public information forum, "Dealing with Breast Cancer." Guest speaker Dr. David Fleischer, director of the McGill Diagnostic Breast Centre. 3655 Drummond, MacIntyre Medical

Building, Howard Palmer Auditorium 18h.

• 1996 McGill Book Fair — new and used books on sale — Redpath Hall. Entrance free.

• The Department of Hispanic Studies presents readings — Bronfman 678, 16h.

## Ongoing

• The Yellow Door, holds storytelling every second and fourth Thursday

Tellers and listeners welcome. 20h, admission is \$3. Info 849-2657.

• LBGT needs volunteers for the Peer Support Phone Line. Info 398-6822.

• Hermeneutic Alchemy: Exhibition presented by the students of the Graduate Program in the History and Theory of Architecture until Oct. 25. Exhibition room, third floor, McGill School of Architecture, Macdonald-Harrington Building,

## Beyond

• McGill Black Students' Network presents the case of Mumia Abu-Jamal, Visible Minorities and Police Brutality. Video at 16h30 followed by a presentation and discussion at 19h, Nov. 1, Shatner Building, second floor. Suggested donation \$3.

Claire G. Cupples, PhD  
Associate Professor, Biology

## Professor's DNA "repair shop" may help save human lives

"DNA is a genetic database that defines who we are, which is why it is so useful in crime solving," says biology professor Claire Cupples of Concordia University. "Like any database, it must be up-to-date and error free." Cupples' research on DNA repair in the bacterium *Escherichia coli* contributes to a broader understanding of how certain enzymes snip out damaged sections of genes and fill in the gaps with correct genetic information, thus keeping the DNA "database" current and accurate. In time, this work may provide additional clues about why defects in DNA repair in human cells lead to cancer. That is why the National Cancer Institute of Canada is funding Dr. Cupples' research.

For Maria Koutroumanis, a trilingual second year MSc student in biochemistry, working with Dr. Cupples and being trained in the very latest molecular biology techniques represents "...an outstanding opportunity to get hands-on training in an environment that allows me to develop and prepare for the real world."

And there are other valid reasons Concordia is the right university for so many people: more than 160 undergraduate and graduate programs with strong reputations in business studies, communications, psychology, fine arts and engineering; a college system offering a personalized approach to education; a friendly atmosphere with professors who are known for their accessibility; a remarkable choice of programs on a full- and part-time basis; and two campuses with a student body truly representative of Montréal's diverse population.

When you consider that Concordia is also known for being in touch with the real world, you can be assured that what you learn here will go farther out there.

Maria Koutroumanis,  
MSc student,  
Biochemistry/  
Molecular Biology



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